

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 SP-02 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05

NSCE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 DHA-02 ORM-01 IO-03 /051 W

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R 031300Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8449

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON 4075

S E C R E T TEHRAN 7872

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, XF, IR

SUBJECT: IRAQI OFFER OF AMNESTY TO KURDS

REF: BAGHDAD 0954

SUMMARY: IRAQI DELEGATION OFFERS AMNESTY TO REMAINING KURDS IN IRAN. BARZANI GROUP IS ABOUT TO RECOMMEND ITS ACCEPTANCE AND TO ENCOURAGE KURDS' RETURN TO IRAQ. END SUMMARY.

1. KURDISH LIAISON OFFICER CALLED ON EMBOFF AUGUST 3 TO INFORM USG THREE IRAQI MEMBERS OF RECENT VISITING DIPLOMATIC MISSION MET JULY 31 WITH 10 KURDISH REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH GOOD OFFICES OF THE IRANIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY. KURDISH REPRESENTATIVES WERE LED BY ABDUL WAHAB ATRUSHI (FORMER KURDISH DEMOCRATIC PARTY (KDP) MILITARY BUREAU HEAD AND GOVERNOR OF ARBIL, 1970-74). IRAQIS WERE: SADOUN MOSLEH AL-TIKRITI, IRAQI SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE FOR NORTHERN(KURDISH) AFFAIRS; COL MOHSEN KHALIL, FORMERLY SECURITY CHIEF

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OF ARBIL; AND ABDUL SAMAD HAMID, LIAISON OFFICER

BETWEEN THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC) AND FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. ALSO PRESENT WAS SALAH SAMARMAD, CULTURAL ATTACHE OF THE IRAQI EMBASSY.

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS IRAQI DELEGATION PRESENTATION OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL OFFER OF AMNESTY FOR "ALL PAST HAPPENINGS." IRAQI DELEGATION HAD WANTED TO VISIT AND MAKE PITCH TO VARIOUS GROUPS OF KURDS BY HELICOPTER, BUT HAD APPARENTLY BEEN DENIED PERMISSION BY IRANIANS, WHO THEN ARRANGED MEETING AND WITHDREW.

3. RCC AMNESTY OFFER WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED AND WOULD INCLUDE ALL KURDS PRESENTLY IN IRAN EXCEPT GENERAL BARZANI; HIS SONS, IDRIS AND MASOUD; AND A NEPHEW, MOHAMMAD KHALID. KURDISH REFUGEES IN IRAN WOULD BE TAKEN BACK INTO ORIGINAL KURDISH AREAS OF AUTONOMY -- ARBIL, SULEIMANEH, AND DUHOK. RESIDENTS OF ONE AREA MAY BE RETURNED TO ANOTHER AREA, BUT ALL WOULD RETURN TO THE NORTH RATHER THAN BE RELOCATED IN SOUTHERN IRAQ. INDIVIDUALS WOULD BE GIVEN THEIR OLD JOBS BACK EXCEPT FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL, WHO WOULD BE RELOCATED IN CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT. ANYONE NOT ACCEPTING THIS AMNESTY WITHIN THE DEADLINE (NOT YET SPECIFIED, BUT PROBABLY BETWEEN 30 AND 60 DAYS) WOULD HAVE THEIR IRAQI CITIZENSHIP WITHDRAWN.

4. KURDISH DELEGATION ASKED WHY BARZANI AND HIS FAMILY WERE TO BE EXCLUDED. IRAQIS REPLIED BARZANIS NOT WELCOME IN IRAQ BECAUSE "SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN" AND IN ANY EVENT, THEY DOUBTED BARZANI WOULD WANT TO RETURN. KURDS ALSO ASKED ABOUT RELOCATION OF KURDS WITHIN IRAQ FROM NORTH TO SOUTH AND WERE ASSURED THIS HAD BEEN STOPPED. THIS CONFIRMED WHAT KURDS HAD LEARNED FROM THEIR OWN SOURCES. THE IRAQI DELEGATION ALSO SAID THAT IF THE RELOCATION OF KURDS NOW IN IRAN GOES WELL, THOSE IN SOUTHERN IRAQ MIGHT BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN THE NORTH.

5. KURDISH SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF KURDISH COMMUNITY HERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING THE MATTER
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AND HAD VIRTUALLY DECIDED TO RECOMMEND ACCEPTANCE OF AMNESTY. FACTORS CITED WERE: 1) FAILURE OF IRANIAN GOVERNMENT TO LIVE UP TO PROMISES REGARDING RELOCATION, 2) INCREASING SAVAK ARRESTS WITHOUT CHARGE OF LOWER LEVEL KURDS AND OTHER INDICATIONS OF IRANIAN PRESSURE, AND 3) GENERAL FEELING THAT BY FAR THE MAJORITY OF KURDS WOULD BE BETTER OFF IN IRAQ THAN IN IRAN UNDER CURRENTLY PREVAILING CONDITIONS.

6. FINAL DECISION WILL AWAIT BARZANI RETURN FROM THE US AND KURDISH LIAISON OFFICER ASKED IF WE KNEW WHEN THIS WOULD BE, SAYING IRANIAN CONTACTS HAD TOLD HIM BARZANI WOULD BE BACK "SOON." EMBOFF REPLIED THIS ACCORDED WITH OUR INFORMATION, BUT WE HAD NO SPECIFIC DETAILS. KURDISH CONTACT SAID IRANIANS HAVE NOT FORMALLY SWUNG THEIR SUPPORT BEHIND AMNESTY OFFER BUT PRESSURE WAS BEGINNING.

7. KURDS KNOW SOME RECENT ARRESTS WITHOUT CHARGE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY SAVAK REQUESTS THAT KURDS WHO WERE PICKED UP COOPERATE WITH SAVAK IN OBTAINING INFORMATION ON IRAQ, BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. ONLY REASON SAVAK HAS GIVEN KDP LEADERS FOR PICKING UP KURDS HAS BEEN THAT THOSE ARRESTED HAD BEEN SEEN VISITING FOREIGN EMBASSIES. KURDS BELIEVE IRANIANS CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR OWN SECURITY AS WELL AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PENETRATION OF IRAQ IF FULL AMNESTY TAKES PLACE.

8. KURDISH LIAISON OFFICER INDICATED HE WAS LEAVING IN THREE DAYS FOR LONDON FOR AN UNSPECIFIED PERIOD TO ASSIST IN REORGANIZATION OF THE KURDISH DEMOCRATIC PARTY ABROAD. GAVE NAME OF NEW CONTACT WHO WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH EMBASSY. URGING INFORMATION BE KEPT VERY CONFIDENTIAL, HE SAID KDP LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY SYRIANS WHO APPEAR TO HAVE TIRED OF TRYING TO DEAL WITH TALABANI GROUP. HE ADDED THERE WERE SIZEABLE NUMBERS OF KDP SUPPORTERS IN SYRIA, JORDAN AND TURKEY, AND ALTHOUGH THESE WERE NOT INVOLVED IN ACTIVE FIGHTING NOW, DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO REORGANIZE THE PARTY, BOTH IN THOSE COUNTRIES AND IN EUROPE, TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES. MAJOR AIM OF REORGANIZATION IS CREATION OF NEW POLITICAL BUREAU WITH YOUNGER, MORE ACTIVE LEADERSHIP AT ALL

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LEVELS. REORGANIZATION IS ALREADY GOING ON WITHIN IRAQ AND AMONG KURDS HERE. WHILE GENERAL BARZANI WILL REMAIN KDP LEADER, MANY WANT YOUNGER, FRESHER BLOOD IN OTHER TOP POSITIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMNESTY, SELFDETERMINATION, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TEHRAN07872
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760299-0185
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760890/aaaadbgt.tel
Line Count: 159
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 BAGHDAD 954
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IRAQI OFFER OF AMNESTY TO KURDS
TAGS: PFOR, IZ, XF, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006